

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-25 NIC-01 OMB-01 PC-04 AID-20

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 IO-14 CU-04

SY-04 A-01 OPR-02 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 OC-06

CCO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 SCCT-02 DRC-01 /200 W

----- 061569

R 071436Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8844

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 5092

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT PGOV ET

SUBJECT: POLITICAL ATMOSPHERICS

REF: ADDIS 4968

1. ALL BUT MOST ANODYNE ETHIOPIAN NEWS ITEMS HAVE DISAPPEARED FROM PRESS AND RADIO LAST SEVERAL DAYS, AND REIMPOSITION TIGHT CENSORSHIP APPARENTLY BEING ACCOMPANIED BY POLICE CRACKDOWN ON PROTESTERS, PARTICULARLY IN ADDIS BUREAUCRACY. EMPEROR APPEALED ONCE AGAIN FOR UNITY AND DISCIPLINE ON MAY 5 VICTORY DAY (SEPTEL).

2. WHETHER BECAUSE OR DESPITE THIS IEG EFFORT REASSERT AUTHORITY AND CALM LOCAL TURBULENCE, COUNTRY SEEMS BE TAKING BREATH FROM INTERMINABLE CONTENTION OF LAST SEVERAL WEEKS.

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3. PROBLEMS HAVE NOT DISAPPEARED, OF COURSE, TENANT-LANDLORD

TENSION CONTINUES WITH SCATTERED INCIDENTS; SECONDARY EDUCATION STILL WIDELY AT STANDSTILL; WORK STOPPAGES/SLOWDOWNS IN PARASTATAL ORGANIZATIONS STILL UNRESOLVED; CERTAIN SMALL MERCHANTS THREATENING STRIKE TOMORROW IF THEIR DEMANDS FOR TAX RELIEF GO UNMET; THESE AND MAY 10 DEADLINE FOR MINIMUM WAGE/COST-OF-LIVING SALARY DETERMINATIONS ALL CONTAIN PLENTY OF TINDER FOR NEW FLAREUP OF DISORDERS. STILL, ADDIS - - A FEW MILITARY PATROLS ASIDE - - LOOKS ALMOST NORMAL, ASMARA IS CALM, AND WE HAVE NO REPORTS OF SEVERE DISTURBANCES FROM PROVINCE CENTERS AT THIS WRITING.

4. CELU'S STRONG PUBLIC REACTION (REFTEL) TO MOD'S ATTEMPT COW ORGANIZED LABOR APPEARS HAVE CAUSED MILITARY PULL IN ITS HORNS SOMEWHAT, AT LEAST FOR NOW. CRUCIAL ISSUE, RIGHT OF PARASTATAL EMPLOYEES TO ORGANIZE, YET TO BE THRASHED OUT BUT ESSENTIAL SERVICES (TELEPHONE, WATER, ELECTRICITY) OPERATING MORE OR LESS ADEQUATELY MEANWHILE.

5. FOREGOING TO THE CONTRARY NOTWITHSTANDING, TENSIONS WITHIN CABINET CONTINUE TO BUILD (SEPTTEL) AND MAY WELL LEAD TO NEW BOUT OF FEVER AT ANY MOMENT.
WYMAN

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